

# ENTERTAINMENT

Technique • Friday, November 30, 2001

## Verbal challenges ahead

See how well you can do on Kit FitzSimons' latest Onward and Crossword creation, entitled 'Impossible Dictionary Pages.' Page 25

## Magic and humor ahead

The world-famous Penn and Teller are returning to the Robert Ferst Center for the Arts, and are always a favorite on the Tech campus. Page 23

## Holiday happenings abound all over campus, Atlanta

By Andrew Santelli  
Entertainment Editor

Though a traditional holiday season typically includes snow and cold weather, Atlanta can hold its own in terms of festivities, a great number of which take place on or near the Tech campus. Midtown Atlanta is a hotbed of activity, especially at this time of year, and activities abound within walking distance.

On campus, the Georgia Tech Music Department and the Robert Ferst Center for the Arts have collaborated for two events celebrating the holidays. The first was last night's performance of Handel's Messiah by the Georgia Tech Chorale, Chamber Choir, and Orchestra. Complementing the Messiah performance is a program entitled Music of the Season. This show features the Chorale and Orchestra as well as the Jazz Ensemble and the Symphonic Band, along with guest conductor Maestro Fulvio Creux of the Italian Army Band. The program, at the Ferst Center, is only \$5 for student tickets and begins at 8:00 p.m.

Walking down Techwood/Centennial Olympic Park Drive, one can find a veritable winter wonderland of sorts as Centennial Park is decorated in holiday finery. Arches span Andrew Young International Boulevard, lighted reindeer figures dot the lawns, and a large tree is illuminated in the center of the Great Lawn. The centerpiece of festivities at Centennial can be found in the amphitheater space near CNN Center. Here, in the middle of Atlanta, a skating rink has been built. Yes, that's right, a skating rink. Regardless of the temperature, the rink opens at night for skating, and though it's no Rockefeller Center, for a moment you can imagine it is and have your own "white Christmas." Admission is \$5, with skate rental running \$2. (The *Technique* advises renting skates even if you own some, because the ice is not of the highest quality.)

Near Centennial Park is the Georgia World Congress Center, which will be hosting the Festival of trees, where visitors can stroll through 150,000 square feet of decorated trees, wreaths and vignettes created by Atlanta's top artists and designers. One can also find gingerbread houses and specialty shops. The festival also features a main stage with continuous live entertainment attracting all ages. This Atlanta tradition raises funds for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta to provide higher quality services in improved facilities. The festival is open Monday-Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Sundays from noon to 6:00 p.m.

Away from campus in another direction, the Fabulous Fox Theatre is again hosting the holiday classic, Atlanta Ballet's The Nutcracker. Atlanta Ballet's Artistic Director John McFall has choreographed this favorite for all ages. Opening night is Friday, December 7, and the show runs until December 30. Tickets start at \$20, and information including show schedules can be found at [www.atlantaballet.com](http://www.atlantaballet.com).

These are just a few of the many holiday celebrations and performances available in the local vicinity this December. For more information on how to find Christmas cheer, Hanukkah happiness, or just general December delight, the Web will be your best resource. Check [www.accessatlanta.com](http://www.accessatlanta.com) for an updated schedule of events, more performance times, and have some fun this holiday season.

## 'Doctor' diagnosis is positive

In the latest offering by DramaTech at the Dean Dull Theater at the Ferst Center, Neil Simon's "The Good Doctor" is the medicine for laughter and fun.

By Bryan Basamanowicz  
Contributing Writer

The four dollar student admissions fee, and a walk to the Ferst Center are well worth Drama Tech's latest production, "The Good Doctor". "The Good Doctor", is a comedy written by Neil Simon inspired by the short stories and plays of Russian writer, Anton Chekhov.

The play is a collection of five comedic vignettes strung together by the engaging and "charming" narration of an overly introspective writer (Femi Sowemimo). It is not overt, but implied, that this "writer" as listed in the cast credits, is in fact

Anton Chekhov and it is Chekhov's frustrations and revelations that we are witnessing. Some of the stories told in the vignettes seem to be moral parables within a comedic backdrop. Others are nothing more than just outrageous and funny.

The visual aspects of the production are rustically simplistic yet adequate and efficient. The costuming is authentic late 19<sup>th</sup>, early 20<sup>th</sup> century garb, representative of the time period within which Chekhov's stories were written. The opening set contains not much more than an

old wooden podium on the left far side of the stage, four wooden chairs on a wide platform ramp in center stage, and what appears to be an analyst's couch on the right near side of the stage. Shortly after the first act takes motion, the cast decorates the set with enough energy to convey an upbeat rendition of classical comedy.

The casting in the play is well on target. From the antics of an overzealous theatre patron, Cherdyakov (Will Wright) to the devilishly smooth operations of lonely bachelor, Peter Semyon (Ganesh Kumaraswamy), the cast

conveys both solid believability and no holds barred animation. The well planned and attentive direction and the efforts of a talented acting troop, make "The Good Doctor" a winner for Drama Tech.

Greg Abbot, DramaTech's artistic director, passed the directing job for this production to a team of ten Tech students enrolled in his fundamentals of directing course. Such an arrangement was a success due to the play's highly differentiable sequences. The directing troop could easily split the up the work

"The Good Doctor" promises to prescribe a healthy dose of weekend relaxation.



By Ian Clark / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Fewi Sowemimo is the Writer and Will Wright is the Policeman, who are both on a hunt for the Sailor, played by Ganesh Kumaraswamy (foreground), in DramaTech's *The Good Doctor*.

without having to worry about disrupting the production's continuity. Furthermore, the split direction seems to accommodate the jagged and haphazard character that compliments the play's script.

Through the team of ten's

highly attentive directing, and the efforts of a talented acting troop "The Good Doctor" is a winner for Drama Tech. With the shadow of finals looming close, "The Good Doctor" promises to prescribe a healthy dose of weekend relaxation.

## Brit Craig David *Born* to thrill audiences



By Andy Earle / ATLANTIC RECORDS

Pioneer of the musical style called "two-step," Britain's Craig David is bringing his talents to Atlanta for a free show Tuesday.

By Bryan Basamanowicz  
Contributing Writer

Artist : Craig David  
Album: *Born to Do It*  
Genre: R&B Soul  
Label: Atlantic Records  
Rating: ★★ 1/2

The transition road from European to American superstar has frequently claimed the aspirations of performance musicians. Most attempts at transatlantic track transfer sink before impacting the American coast. Yet the cross-continental bridge of England's progressive R&B soul sensation, Craig David, seems to be indestructible.

Growing up in the small, poor, and "un-hip" British town of Southampton, David took an early interest in deejaying and song writing. His father, who played bass in a local reggae band, introduced him to reggae's various styles and methods. His mother in the meantime exposed him to the provocative allure of classic soul. David developed his interests with determination, regularly sneaking into dance clubs, learning from the working deejays and attentively absorbing the character of the dance

hall underground.

At 14, David won a national songwriting competition. His award winning composition was soon thereafter recorded by then-popular British soul operation "Damage", and rose to #3 on the charts.

David spent the bulk of his mid-teens working clubs and parties as a performance deejay and MC. After building a formidable name for himself, his song writing and charismatic performing talents brought him the attention of producer Mark Hill. It wasn't long before a little effort towards significant publicity turned Craig David into a smashing success.

*Born To Do It*, already a multi-platinum success in the UK, made a decent hit in the states, entering the *Billboard* album chart at #11 and respectfully settling in the high thirties. It's the singles off the album, however, that are more indicative of the success of David's American crusade. His first single "Fill Me In" was quick to break through in both Top 40 and R&B radio with its top-15 showing on the *Billboard* Hot 100. David's current single "7

See David, page 27



# A little magic, a dose of mayhem, a cockroach or two...

By Alan Back  
Senior Staff Writer

Come clean, now. You're sick to death of watching magicians who know more about special effects than they do about genuine sleight of hand. Things blow up, disappear, or get cut up and reassembled, and you know there's something hinky going on.

Then you run into people like Penn and Teller, two self-described "carny scumbag losers" who make it their business to let audiences peek behind the curtain. What pops out just might be even stranger than the things in plain sight.

Ponytailed loudmouth Penn Jillette and the silent Teller (yes, that is his sole legal name) have spent 27 years cooking up what they call "a magic show for people who hate magic." Audiences have watched Jillette read poetry at top speed and threaten to drop a straitjacketed Teller into a bed of spikes if he doesn't free himself in time. They've seen Teller run a knife through his partner's hand during a perfectly normal card trick. Both do escape tricks to the strains of Edward Grieg, then pick up the melody on bass and keys once they get loose.

And through it all, on and off Broadway, Teller has kept his lip firmly buttoned onstage. The habit started in his college days, as a way of getting people to pay attention to the magic tricks he did at fraternity parties. Little did he know how much it would benefit him later.

"One of the great things I've learned is how much being still, absolutely dead still at the right moment, conveys a world of thought and action. Twenty years ago, I would have been running around like Harpo Marx!" Teller said. "[The key is] figuring out how to convey your ideas in a very clear way, without talking to excess."

To watch him at work, letting his deft hands and pliable face serve

as a counterpoint to Jillette's almost nonstop bluster, is to understand the old saw "Actions speak louder than words." They have to when there's a wood chipper running in the middle of the stage!

That bit of equipment turned up during the pair's last visit to Georgia Tech in 1999. Whether they plan to fire it up when they return in January is still up in the air, but they have plenty of other tricks up the sleeves of their Zegna suits. "We always try to bring in, as Aristotle would say, a good admixture of the familiar and the strange."

Versatility comes in handy once in a while for this pair. Think about

"One of the great things I've learned is how much being still, absolutely dead still at the right moment, conveys a world of thought and action."

**Teller,**  
on letting his act speak for itself

it: Three books of their favorite tricks and scams. Guest appearances all over the airwaves, including *The Drew Carey Show*, *Dharma & Greg*, and *The Simpsons*. A string of specials and series that have run on both American and British television. Even a few ventures onto the big screen, as in *Fantasia 2000* to host—what else?—the legendary "Sorcerer's Apprentice" segment.

But they never forget where they're most at home. "If you look at how we actually make our living, we really do it as live show performers. There's not a lot of people who can say that nowadays," Teller explained. "Happily, that is the most

under our control, because over the years we've built up a considerable audience and they want to see interesting, surprising stuff."

Which they get in great abundance, thanks to a combination of fresh additions to the bag of tricks and a healthy repertoire built up over a quarter-century and change. Even the long-time audience favorites get an occasional tweak to spruce them up. Case in point: "Looks Simple," in which Teller executes an increasingly convoluted string of cigarette sleights while Jillette narrates each maneuver and accompanies himself on bass—or at least he used to.

"One of the things we thought was, because that had sort of a musical jazz quality, it would be better for Penn to be playing the line on an upright bass. He spent the larger part of the last year learning to play it and falling seriously in love with jazz." Strange things happen when you turn a couple of renegade magicians loose on the rest of the world.

Just ask David Letterman, whose studio was almost overrun by the cockroaches they sneaked onto his desk during one of their first spots on his show. Or tune in to ABC and watch Jillette pop up on *Politically Incorrect* now and then ("He invariably, passionately advocates freedom and atheism," Teller noted). Or watch the op-ed pages, where both occasionally write columns on behalf of the Cato Institute.

You might grab a copy of *When I'm Dead All This Will Be Yours*, Teller's book about his father; it led to exhibitions of the latter's drawings and cartoons in the family hometown of Philadelphia. If you happen to be near MIT or Oxford University, you might even catch them doing a guest lecture or two.

"It generally consists of just Q&A, but it's something that we sort of consider as an expression of our point of view in art and other things," Teller said. "They laugh a



Courtesy of Sharon Ahmed / ROBERT FERST CENTER FOR THE ARTS

**Penn and Teller love to fool people even while they show what they're hiding up their sleeves. They visit Tech for two nights of shows in January.**

lot while we're there." Would it be the same if they didn't?

And would it be a Penn and Teller show if the guys in the suits didn't take a typical magic act and turn it on its ear? Of course not. Hence the bullet-catching trick done with a pair of .357 Magnum revolvers, Penn's love of juggling shattered liquor bottles, Teller's penchant for scarfing down a handful of needles and thread and pulling the lot, neatly strung, from his mouth.

Letting the audience in on the secret is sometimes the heart of the illusion, as Teller readily pointed out when describing their take on an old chestnut. "Typically, when someone does an escape trick, they get bound up in a box or bag or something like that. Then the assistants will come out and put a folding screen in front of them, and the performer emerges from behind the

See *Penn and Teller*, page 26

Onward and Crossword Impossible Dictionary Pages

By Kit FitzSimons  
Staff Writer

ACROSS

- 1. Cheerleader cry
- 4. Madagascar’s continent (abbr)
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_ Men (They let the dogs out)
- 11. Treble or bass
- 13. Little piggy?
- 14. Some simians
- 15. Impossible page that covers it all? (3 wds)
- 18. Sunrise
- 19. Pester about chores
- 20. A quintillionth
- 21. Raggedy doll
- 22. Tse-tung’s grp.
- 25. \_\_\_\_\_, amas, amat
- 26. Got dirty playing baseball, perhaps
- 29. Pre-blessing exclamation?
- 31. Pick up
- 33. Opera song type
- 35. Prefix for pad or port
- 36. (Is) part of the conspiracy (2 wds)
- 37. Type of Celt
- 38. Piercing tools
- 39. Sources of Crockett’s hats
- 41. Mini test
- 43. Cravat
- 44. NY clock setting
- 45. Not quite tetra-
- 47. Gov. concern class
- 49. Bush press secretary Fleischer
- 50. “No \_\_\_\_\_!” (“Easy!”)
- 51. Impossible page that Bond has? (3 wds)
- 57. Lighbulb over one’s head
- 58. Foglike soup?
- 59. Feminine suffix
- 60. Soak in the rays
- 61. Aye
- 62. Nashville-Tallahassee dir.

DOWN

- 1. Cheap colas
- 2. Hgt. on a mt.
- 3. Impossible page that’s got you covered? (3 wds)
- 4. The A of ADD, for short
- 5. The \_\_\_\_\_ Fighters

- 6. He jogs on football fields
- 7. Food for 14 ACROSS
- 8. Eat like \_\_\_\_\_ (gobble) (2 wds)
- 9. Masculine pronouns
- 10. Hero of ‘Pokemon’
- 12. Campus house type
- 16. (By) couples
- 17. Roadside Radisson
- 20. Types of acids
- 21. Buh-bye, to Bebe
- 22. Impossible page that the dog got hold of? (3 wds)
- 23. C&W star Raye
- 24. Graceful stance
- 25. Charles Dodgson character
- 27. Fall behind
- 28. Saddam Hussein, for one
- 30. Half a dance step
- 32. Country station, for short
- 34. He stings like a bee
- 40. Sign you didn’t use Windex,

- perhaps
- 42. Nil
- 46. \_\_\_\_\_ Tin Tin
- 48. Soda, in PA
- 49. 1 and 11, in blackjack
- 50. They hold bake sales
- 51. Word after ad or Women’s
- 52. Ore-\_\_\_\_\_
- 53. 007, for one
- 54. Wide shoe size
- 55. Not to be washed w/ dks. or whts.
- 56. Sara or Robert E.

The answers to this week’s Onward and Crossword may be found by flipping to page 26, and for the final time this semester, the Technique makes no apologies if you get all the answers wrong. Have a good finals week.

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	
11			12		13			14				
15				16				17				
		18					19					
	20					21				22	23	24
25				26	27	28		29	30			
31			32		33			34		35		
36					37					38		
39				40		41			42		43	
44				45	46			47	48			
			49				50					
	51	52				53	54				55	56
	57					58				59		
	60					61				62		

The answers are on the next page. Yes, it will be tempting to flip over quickly and peek at the answers. So here’s what you do: if you see anyone—*anyone*—looking at the answers, take your copy of the *Technique*, roll it up tightly, and smack that cheater in the back of the head. He or she should know better.

To those this applies to—good luck on your finals next week.



The Live List:  
11/30 to 12/7

**CJ’S LANDING (270 Buckhead Ave.) (404) 237-7657**  
[www.cjslanding.com](http://www.cjslanding.com)  
11/30—Big Atomic, Loud American Tourists, Jet  
12/1—Sasquatch, Big Jack Pneumatic, Nothing Simple  
12/5—Colin Hay, Eddie Bush  
12/7—Big Sky

**COTTON CLUB (152 Luckie St.) (404) 688-1193**  
[www.atlantaconcerts.com/cottonclub.asp](http://www.atlantaconcerts.com/cottonclub.asp)  
11/30—Angie Aparo, Gibb Droll  
12/1—Southern Culture on the Skids, Fighting Gravity  
12/3—Drowning Pool, Stereomud, Lennon, No One  
12/6—Dilated Peoples, Source of Labor, Supernatural

**DARK HORSE TAVERN (816 N. Highland Ave.) (404) 873-3607**  
11/30—Drednot, Sick Speed, Knuckle  
12/1—Cool for August, Jade, Jet  
12/4—The Yard, Candiasm, Enigmatics  
12/6—Half Down Thomas  
12/7—Brighter Shade, Big Atomic, Tunamint

**ECHO LOUNGE (551 Flat Shoals Rd.) (404) 681-3600**  
[www.echostatic.com/echolounge](http://www.echostatic.com/echolounge)  
11/30—Mache, Aerogramme  
12/1—Metrosceen, Phaser, The Features  
12/2—El Vez, Lust  
12/3—Enon, Love As Laughter  
12/7—Dismemberment Plan, Ted Leo, El Guapo

**EDDIE’S ATTIC (515-B N. McDonough St.) (404) 377-4976**  
[www.eddiesattic.com](http://www.eddiesattic.com)  
11/30—Gerard McHugh, Keli Mercadante  
12/1—Gracie & the Slipcovers, Kyle Shiver  
12/2—Screen Door, Christine Havrilla  
12/4—Quarter Past Three, Claire & Bain’s Maple Yum-Yum, Libby Eason  
12/5—Chuck Brodsky, Tim Flannery  
12/6—Ellis Paul, Susan Greenbaum  
12/7—Don Conoscenti, Mike Willis

**MASQUERADE (695 North Ave.) (404) 577-2007**  
[www.masq.com](http://www.masq.com)  
11/30—Temptation  
12/1—Exposure  
12/3—Dave Navarro

12/5—Dashboard Confessional, Further Seems Forever, Fairweather Seville  
12/7—Reverend Horton Heat, Dash Rip Rock  
**ROXY (3110 Roswell Rd.) (404) 233-7699**  
[www.atlantaconcerts.com/roxy.asp](http://www.atlantaconcerts.com/roxy.asp)  
11/30—Flickerstick, 6 Against 7, Slangbanger  
12/1—Disco Biscuits

**SMITH’S OLDE BAR (1580 Piedmont Ave.) (404) 875-1522**  
[www.smithsoldebar.com](http://www.smithsoldebar.com)  
11/30—Vigilantes of Love, Heritage Cherry, Acres  
12/1—Tenderlids, Sick Speed, Abandoned Pools  
12/2—Cropduster, Vue, The Hiss  
12/3—Rantings of Eva, Liquid Jungle, Some of None  
12/4—David Ryan Harris  
12/5—Raul Malo  
12/6—Sutanos, Diestra, Smadhi  
12/7 and 12/8—White Animals, John Almett

**STAR BAR (437 Moreland Ave.) (404) 681-9018**  
[www.starbar.net](http://www.starbar.net)  
11/30—Countdown Quartet, Cadillac Jones  
12/1—Alejandro Escovedo, Kelly Hogan  
12/5—Crybaby, Kate Simpkins, Ashen

**TABERNACLE (152 Luckie St.) (404) 659-9022**  
[www.tabernaclemusic.com](http://www.tabernaclemusic.com)  
12/2—Macy Gray

**UNDER THE COUCH (Couch Bldg.) (404) 206-0985**  
[utc.gatech.edu](http://utc.gatech.edu)  
11/30—Almost Heroes, Summers Disregard, Two Week Notice, Parksideview  
12/1—7-10 Split, Fareway, Enamored  
12/2—Guitar Wars Jam Out!  
12/7—Shamgod

**VARIETY PLAYHOUSE (1099 Euclid Ave.) (404) 521-1786**  
[www.varietyplayhouse.com](http://www.varietyplayhouse.com)  
11/30—The Radiators, Big Wu  
12/1—Beausoleil  
12/2—Meshell Ndegeocello, Jason Blackwell  
12/6—Ronny Jordan  
12/7—Rebirth Brass Band

## Penn and Teller

from page 23

screen, all dripping with sweat. You're left with the question, 'How in the world did he get out of this big box, all closed up and sealed?'"

He continued, "We're doing that, but we're omitting one essential prop: the screen. You have to decide, as an audience member, whether you wish to be mystified or informed... You can opt to take home the question of how it is possible to do that, and to be wonderfully and deliciously and *voluntarily* fooled by it." But if you decide that you want to see how it's done, you have to promise yourself that you'll keep the secret—hence the trick's name, "The Honor System."

Magic that entertains, that makes people think and wonder, has its place in the world, but magic as a spectacle or publicity stunt is a few steps down the ladder. Take David Blaine's ABC prime-time special last year, in which he had himself encased in ice for three days in Times Square—and did little but stand

there. Grandiose blowout productions, such as those staged by David Copperfield or Siegfried and Roy, fare about as well in the eyes of Penn and Teller.

However, in Teller's view, performers like Blaine and Ricky Jay have helped bring close-up sleights and small-scale shows back from relative obscurity. "When you look at television, you know that there is a lot of electronics between you and what you're seeing... What [Jay's] done, and what David Blaine is doing, is to give a flavor and context in which you can really put yourself into the scene, identify with someone who's experiencing something amazing."

These two have spent half their lives making magic and raising Cain at the same time. Teller knows exactly how long he wants to stay at it: "Until you can't lift me out of my bed." His partnership with Jillette took a long time to bear fruit, he stated, but is now so deeply rooted

that they have trouble seeing themselves working apart from one another.

Suppose the unthinkable happened and one of them were to die onstage; given their reputation, the audience might think it was just part of the act! "I would be thrilled with that," Teller cheerfully admitted. "We even have a joint grave that already exists, with a headstone for it, in the Forest Lawn cemetery in Burbank. It's one of the most touristy cemeteries in the world, and it has the punchline to a card trick in our book [*How to Play in Traffic*]."

All performers hope to go out on a high note. If a clown college graduate and a former high school Latin teacher can leave fans scratching their heads even after they're gone, though, everybody else will have a tough act to follow.

*Penn and Teller will be performing at the Robert Ferst Center for the Arts on January 11 and 12. Call (404) 894-9600 or stop by the Student Center box office to purchase tickets.*

## Onward and Crossword Answers

R	A	H			A	F	R		B	A	H	A	
C	L	E	F		T	O	E		A	P	E	S	
S	T	A	R	T	T	O	F	I	N	I	S	H	
			D	A	W	N			N	A	G		
	A	T	T	O			A	N	N		C	C	P
A	M	O		S	L	I	D		A	C	H	O	O
L	I	F	T		A	R	I	A		H	E	L	I
I	N	O	N		G	A	E	L		A	W	L	S
C	O	O	N	S		Q	U	I	Z		T	I	E
E	S	T		T	R	I			E	C	O	N	
			A	R	I			P	R	O	B		
	L	I	C	E	N	S	E	T	O	K	I	L	L
	I	D	E	A		P	E	A		E	T	T	E
	B	A	S	K		Y	E	S			S	S	E

## David

from page 21

Days” has become successful in multiple radio formats, including Atlanta’s own 95.5 FM, “The Beat.” Additionally, both singles took solid positions in MTV’s video rotation.

*Born To Do It* opens with two of David’s strongest numbers, the energetic, hit-worthy, romantic dance ballad, “Fill Me In” and the equally danceable ode to faithfulness, “Can’t Be Messing ‘Round.” These songs give the listener a delightful opportunity to digest David’s fresh rhythmic alterations to conventional R&B music. The common format for R&B finds the beat constituting the backbone of the song’s trajectory, and the vocalist seems to ride on top of the beat in a complimentary fashion. David’s style manages to bridge the gap between rap and dance music by utilizing partial and spontaneous rather than patterned drum beats, while allowing the vocals to rapidly pound away and provide the song’s rhythmic leadership. If you try to look for a continuous drumbeat in “Fill Me In,” you’ll give yourself a headache. However, if you try to dance to it, you’ll have little trouble. David’s is a brilliant and fresh method that systematically adds more potency to his already pronounced vocal talents. Additionally, David’s talents as a deejay is apparent in his ability to make dramatic alterations to the superstructures of R&B that mix and match into well-executed music.

The third song on the album, “Rendezvous,” is a significantly slower song that might be somewhat enchanting if you could feel the same

breakthrough freshness found in the former tracks. The song disappoints and calls into question David’s versatility. Unfortunately, “Rendezvous” isn’t the album’s only misstep. Much like David’s delightfully unpredictable beats, the songs that really hit home as hit-worthy are scattered throughout the album. However, the less noteworthy monotonous tracks aren’t bad per se; they won’t bother the standard R&B fan, because they offer no more than standard R&B.

As stated above, the possibility of Craig David as a deep American success relies heavily on the efforts of his hit songs and not on his works as a whole. One of David’s tougher challenges on the road to hitting it big in America will be acquiring devoted fans who will go out and buy *Born To Do It* rather than just turn the radio up when they hear “7 Days” being played. Yet, with his uncanny video friendly good looks, his lyrical romanticism, a tireless performance schedule, a lot of photo shoots, and his English accent, David could very likely make a deep and financially lucrative explosion into the hearts and allowances of \*N Sync-weary American teenage girls. But all cynicism aside, David’s contribution to the American R&B scene is a relevant one and deserves exploration from all those music fans looking for some new diversions to satisfy them.

*Craig David will be playing a free concert at the Riviera Club on December 4 at 7:00 pm. For more, check out [www.955thebeat.com](http://www.955thebeat.com).*

# No diamonds in Swank’s *Necklace*

By Iain Morton  
*Daily Trojan*

(U-WIRE) U. Southern California—In the mid-18th century, King Louis XV commissioned a necklace for his famed mistress, Madame du Barry. Spanning the globe, the royal jewelers of France collected the world’s best stones in a vulgar display of decadence that would allegedly lead to the downfall of one of the most famous monarchies the world has ever known. The 2,800-carat, 647-diamond monstrosity never adorned the neck of its intended wearer. The king died and his mistress was exiled long before it was ever completed, leaving the royal jewelers with a royal pain in the pockets.

The jewelers made several attempts to sell the necklace considered their greatest and most opulent achievement to the next queen, Marie Antoinette, even going as far as re-fashioning the diamonds in a new “Marie-friendly” setting, to no avail. On the verge of bankruptcy and with no other buyers at hand, the jewelers turned to a confidant of the queen to help in their desperate situation a decision that led to one of the most infamous scandals in the annals of history.

Based on the sketchy, yet semi-factual, events on the eve of the French Revolution, “The Affair of the Necklace” involves a cast of characters as brilliant and sparkling as the famed necklace itself. Jeanne de la Motte-Valois (Hilary

Swank), a young woman orphaned at an early age, sets out to restore her family’s tarnished name and inadvertently sparks the flame that will burn an entire monarchy to the ground. Starting with the politically motivated murder of her father and the subsequent hardship demise of her mother, Jeanne’s life is one of historically questionable intrigue and scandal.

A pompous, spoiled but political spin-savvy queen, a corrupt, power-abusive cardinal, a self-proclaimed 3,000-year-old mystic and scam artist

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these are a few of the players in a story that spans Jeanne’s socially troubled years leading up to the French Revolution wherein she is approached by the royal jewelers of France with a small favor. And the rest, as they say, is history.

“The Affair of the Necklace” (or “L’Affaire du Collier,” as it has long been known in Europe) is, by the filmmakers’ own admission, a non-factual retelling of historically debated actual events (or, in Hollywood-ese, “based on true events”). This much-anticipated post-Oscar entry from Swank, 1999’s dark-horse best actress winner, is a

carefully crafted showcase that manages to lose the sparkle of the “actual” and focuses more on the “events.” Director-producer Charles Shyer, of the “Father of the Bride” re-make franchise, makes his first serious film bid with this redressing of history’s footnotes with mixed results.

At once a rich, sweeping period piece and a cheap attempt to grab Oscar gold, “The Affair of the Necklace” is a letdown on both accounts. Shyer gives Swank a cast of talented and respected actors to bounce off, but fails to pay attention to details in character and period. Although clever at times, screenwriter John Sweet’s departure from the real main character of the film the necklace makes for a heroine who can be neither loved nor hated, and the same can be said of the film.

With limited character development and background on the part of Sweet and an even more limited dialect coach, Swank does a passable job with Jeanne. Failing to convey the heroine’s motives and desires believably (the key to pulling this part off), Swank sounds and looks more like a scheming, costume party-going valley girl trying to pimp beer at the local 7-Eleven than a woman who may have helped topple the French monarchy.

Jonathan Pryce, Joely Richardson and Christopher Walken are all wickedly fantastic in their scene-stealing bit parts, proving that “The Affair of the Necklace” should have been about just that the necklace, the many deviant hands in which it passed and the famously decadent bosoms it nuzzled.